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THE TRUE  
State of the PROCESS

AGAINST

Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine*

Minister of the Gospel at *Stirling*:

SETTING FORTH

The Proceedings of the Synod of  
*Perth* and *Stirling* against him,

AND THE

ACT of the late ASSEMBLY concerning him, and some other Ministers adhering to his PROTEST.

Together with a

PREFACE and APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

Some REMARKS on the Preface to the  
two Acts of Assembly lately publish'd.

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EDINBURGH,

Printed by THOMAS LUMSDEN and JOHN  
ROBERTSON. M.DCC.XXXIII.



THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
FROM THE FIRST BEGINNINGS  
TO THE PRESENT STATE

AND THE  
CHURCHES OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CAMBRIDGE

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## To the READER.

READER,

**T**HE two Acts of the last General Assembly, one concerning some Ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and the other concerning Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, and some other Ministers adhering to his Protest, having been published, as is given out in the Preface to the said Acts, for the Information of the Ministers and Members of this Church, who were not present at the Assembly, and to prevent Misrepresentations which are too frequent among us at present; for the better obtaining of these two laudable Ends, it was thought necessary to send abroad into the World the following authentic Extract of the Process of the Synod of Perth and Stirling against Mr. Erskine, which was not designed at present, had it not been extorted by the odious Light, in which the Publisher sets this Affair, both in his Preface, and likewise by annexing that Part of the Process, which contains the Synod's Charge against Mr. Erskine's Sermon, without emitting his Defences along with it; which is not a fair and candid Way of informing the impartial World, who must be left to judge if Mr. Erskine in his Synodical Sermon be guilty of so bold and daring a Practice, as the Prefacer is pleased to call it.

The Prefacer doth not give such a candid Information as he pretends, when he affirms, That

*Mr. Erskine said nothing before the Assembly. If he was present, he might have heard Mr. Erskine at the Bar complain, That the Synod of Perth and Stirling had commenced a Process against him for Censure, without ever shewing wherein he had departed from the Word of God, and the approven Standards of this Church, contrary to the express Order laid down in the Form of Process, Chap. 1. Sect. 4. which he craved might be read, which was done accordingly, and is as follows, That nothing ought to be admitted by any Church-judicatory as a Ground of Process for Censure, but what hath been declared censurable by the Word of God, or some Act or universal Custom of this national Church agreeable thereto. He might also have heard Mr. Erskine insist, That the Assembly might now rectify that Error of the Synod, by proceeding according to this Rule: As also, when Mr. Mercer brought in an excentrical Story of the Disorders which happened in Relation to the Settlement of Kilsauns, he might have heard Mr. Erskine complain of that Speech, as designed to lodge the Blame of the Disorders at Kilsauns on his Sermon, which yet was not preached for several Months after these Disorders happened.*

*The Prefacer palms it upon the World, as Matter of Confession with Mr. Erskine, That every one of a Christian Congregation had by divine Right an undoubted Title to vote in the Choice of their Minister; which is so far from being Matter of Confession, that it doth not appear to be a tenable Principle with him, That scandalous, ignorant and immoral Persons, can have*

*a Title to vote in the Election of a Minister : As is evident from p. 17. Synod-Sermon, Edit. 2. where he says, 'That the Call of the Church lies 'in the free Choice and Election of the Christian 'People.' Now, 'tis plain, That by a Christian People Mr. Erskine understands such as are admitted into full Communion with the Church in all her sealing Ordinances ; as will appear from the Description he gives of the Church of Christ in this World, in his Discourse upon Isaiah 9. 6. which goes along with the Synodical Sermon, p. 58. of the above Edition ; his Words are, 'By the Church I understand that 'Remnant of Adam's Family, who, being 'determined to break their Covenant with Hell, 'and their Agreement with Death, join themselves to Christ as their Prophet, 'Priest and 'King, either in Reality, or by a visible and 'credible Profession of their Faith in him.' This being Mr. Erskine's declared Principle, it is evident it could never be Matter of Confession with him, That every Individual, of what is commonly called a Christian Congregation, hath by divine Right an undoubted Title to vote in the Election of their Minister.*

*The Prefacer further adds, That Mr. Erskine stood by, and heard his Lawiers, without contradicting them, plead in his Name, That, in his Sermon, by the Church having Right to elect their own Pastors, he could not be thought to understand the Christian People of a Congregation, but the Judicatories of the Church. To which it is answered, That it is very uncharitable to suppose that these learned Gentlemen would of Design betray the Cause they were pre-*



tending to defend; it is evident they did plead a Point very proper for them, viz. The Irrelevancy of the Expressions, as laid in the Minutes of Synod, to infer any Censure upon Mr. Erskine; and this he himself might have safely done, without departing in the least from the Confession he made in his Sermon. Besides, it is not Fact (as the Prefacer alledges) that these Gentlemen placed the Right of electing a Minister in the Judicatories of the Church, seclusive of the Christian People of a Congregation: Notwithstanding of all which, when a Reverend Member moved in the Assembly, That Mr. Erskine might be enquired, If he owned what the Advocates had spoke at the Bar, as his own Mind or Sentiment in this Affair, and if he would give any Sense or Explication of the Propositions charged against him by the Synod: And the Question being accordingly put by the Moderator, he replied, That, as he would not adopt every Thing spoke by the Lawiers at the Bar, so neither would he put any Sense upon the Propositions as stated by the Synod in their Charge, in regard they were their own, and none of his: And added, That this Affair is now before the Assembly, and they may judge in it as they see Cause. From which it appears, That tho' the Advocates had (as the Prefacer alledges) contradicted Mr. Erskine's Confession, yet he is no way answerable for it; and it would have been justly thought a Piece of great Weakness in him to explain the Propositions as the Synod had found them, for no other End but to assist the Assembly in supporting the Grounds of the Synod's Sentence against himself, when the Synod themselves were straitned to do it, as appears by a  
modest



modest Proposal, made by Mr. Mercer one of the Managers for the Synod at the Assembly's Bar, viz. That the Assembly should read Mr. Erskine's Reasons of Appeal given in within ten Days after the Sentence was past; and the Design of this Motion was to find out the just Meaning of the Expressions upon which the Synod had found Mr. Erskine censurable so many Days before.

The Prefacer next endeavours to sully the Character of the Four Protesting Brethren, by representing them as contemning the Authority of the Assembly, contrary to the Rules of this Church. But, what Rule of this Church he has in his Eye, it is hard to tell; only it is not to be supposed that this Church has yet established any Rule inconsistent with that Article in our Confession of Faith, Chap. 20. Sect. 2. where it is asserted, That "God alone is the Lord of the Conscience, and has left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of Men, which are in any Thing contrary to his Word or beside it, in Matters of Faith or Worship; so that to believe such Doctrines, or to obey such Commands out of Conscience, and the requiring of an implicate Faith, and an absolute and blind Obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience, and Reason also." From whence it is plain, That, according to the Principles of this Church, no Man is bound to obey or submit to Church-decisions, unless they appear to be founded on the Word of God; which was never attempted, tho' always demanded in the present Case: And therefore, the very Nature of the Thing admits of a Protest, without any Contempt of Church.

Au-

*Authority lawfully exercised ; a Protest being in its own Nature, and even in the Signification of the Word, nothing else but a solemn Testimony for, and Declaration of the Truth, when Men conceive it to be any Way injured, which was the Case in Hand.*

*The Prefacer to the Acts waves the many Observations, he says, might be made upon the Conduct of Mr. Erskine and his Adherents, having no Inclination to burden the Reader with a large Preface. Only, since the Prefacer hopes he will be excused to remark, that whatever has been done by the Assembly and other Judicatories of the Church, which to some may look like Severity against the Brethren concerned, has been extorted from them against their Inclination, by the Obstinacy of these Brethren ; It is hoped, likewise, the Reader will excuse the following Observation ;*

*When a Point in Controversy is about Sin or Duty, and the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of an Ecclesiastick Constitution, and a Practice directed and influenced thereby ; this being a Matter wherein the Consciences of Men are so nearly interested, violent Pushing in this Case, to Heights and Extremities, has ever been attended with very fatal and dangerous Consequences. A lamentable Instance whereof we have in a former Period of this Church, when a Protestation was entered against the publick Resolutions, for receiving disaffected Persons into Places of Civil and Military Trust. The Point then in Controversy appears to have been much narrower than the present : The publick Resolutions did indeed open a Door for Persons of known Disaffection*

on, to enter into Places of Civil Trust; but the Act of Assembly, complained of, invests Heritors (as such) in a Privilege purely Ecclesiastical, wherein the eternal Salvation of Mens Souls is concerned; and gives a Power to such as are, not only declared Enemies to our excellent Presbyterian Constitution, but disaffected to the Protestant Succession in the illustrious Family of Hanover, which now, by the good Hand of God, and thro' a Series and Train of remarkable Providences, sways the Royal Sceptre over Britain and Ireland; to palm Ministers upon all the Congregations of Scotland, where their Interest and Influence doth prevail, contrary to our known Principles. And the Decision of the late General Assembly, in the Case of Mr. Erskine, laying an Embargo upon Ministers, and stopping their Mouths from regretting in Publick the Sinfulness and Danger which they evidently apprehend to be in this Act of Assembly; This is what may be judged has extorted, from the Brethren concerned, a Protestation for their just Privilege and Duty, to testify publickly against the same or like Defections, upon all proper Occasions.

In the above-mentioned Period of this Church, some eminent Ministers of the protesting Side were deposed, and among others, as Mr. Wodrow justly calls him, that extraordinary Man Mr. Thomas Hog Minister at Kiltearn, and several others were suspended; but what woful Effects these violent Measures produced, is too well known.

What the above Historian observes upon this Head, Vol. i. p. 40. may serve as a Beacon to this Church



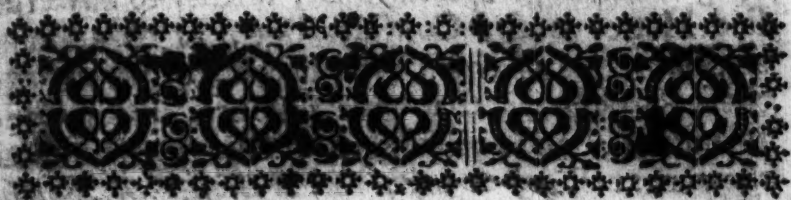
*Church and her present Managers: His Words are, " In the Synod of Lothian, Things were  
 " carried with a very high Hand,—the Pro-  
 " testers were treated most insolently, they were  
 " not suffered so much as to speak of any Testi-  
 " mony,—Some Members of the Synod fully  
 " ripe for a Change, and ready to fall in with  
 " the Managers Designs, proposed that the  
 " Synod should begin at censuring and sentencing  
 " the Brethren who had been for the Protesta-  
 " tion ;" which accordingly they did, as ap-  
 " pears from the Sequel.*

*Now, if Matters are push'd to such Extremi-  
 ties against the Four protelling Brethren, or these  
 concerned in the other Act relative to some Mi-  
 nisters in the Presbytery of Dunfermline, it may  
 be somewhat alleviating to them, That others  
 have drunk of this suffering Cup before them.*

*P. S. All Papers relative to this Process are  
 here published, except the Synod of Perth  
 and Stirling their Answers to the Reasons  
 of Appeal and Dissent ; and if it is alled-  
 ged, That this State of the Process is defective  
 without them ; the Publisher hereof not ha-  
 ving a just Copy of these Papers, it is hoped  
 the Prefacer to the Acts, or some of his  
 Friends, will take Care to supply that De-  
 fect.*

**Extract**





Extract of PROCESS  
OF THE

Synod of Perth and Stirling,

AGAINST

Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine* Minister at  
*Stirling.*

*Perth, the tenth Day of October, One thousand  
seven hundred and thirty two Years.*



HICH Day and Place, the  
Provincial Synod of *Perth*  
and *Stirling* met ; after read-  
ing the Minutes of the Fore-  
noon's *Sederunt*, several of  
the Members represented to  
the Synod, There were many  
Things delivered by Mr. *Er-*  
*skine* in his Sermon this Day, at the Opening of  
the Synod, which gave Offence; some Circum-  
stances they condescended upon, and told they

could condescend upon more. The Synod, after long Reasoning, agreed so far, further to have the said Matter under Consideration, as to appoint a Committee of their Number, in order to have these Particulars, that gave Offence, under Consideration ; and to lay them before the Synod at their next Diet, to wit, Mr. *Wilson*, Mr. *Faichney*, Mr. *William Moncrief*, Mr. *Pilmar*, Mr. *Alexander Moncrief*, Mr. *M'Lagan*, Mr. *Mercer*, Mr. *M'Intosh*, Mr. *Mackie*, Mr. *Fergusson* at *Logireat*, Mr. *Hunter*, Mr. *William Stewart*, Mr. *Andrew Schaw*, Mr. *Bissat*, Mr. *Gow*, Mr. *Finlayson*, Mr. *Andrew Smith*, Mr. *Brugh*, Mr. *Frier*, Mr. *Fergusson* at *Killin*, Ministers ; Provost *Cree*, Lairds of *Glendoick* and *Leyes*, Ruling Elders ; with the Moderator and Correspondents : And they are to meet this Night immediately after the Rising of the Synod, and to appoint their own Time and Place of Meeting, with Power to adjourn themselves as they shall see Cause.

Perth, October eleventh, One thousand seven hundred and thirty two Years, ante meridiem.

THE Synod calling for the Report of their Committee, they appointed Yesterday to meet on the Affair of Mr. *Erskine's* Sermon ; they gave in their Report in Writ, which is as follows. The Committee that was appointed by the Synod to meet on the Affair relating to Mr. *Erskine's* Sermon, being met, and entering on the Affair, and, after some Reasoning, they agreed to appoint a Sub-committee to call Mr. *Erskine* before



fore them, and to tell him, That the 'Strain of these Expressions in his Sermon gave Offence, and to condescend upon some Particulars uttered by him in his Sermon, that gave Offence; and to deal with him, to see if he will acknowledge he was in the wrong in emitting such Expressions, and will promise, before the Synod, that he will not express himself on publick Occasions in Time coming after that Manner; and, to that Effect, they appoint Mr. William Moncrief, Mr. William Stewart, Mr. Alexander M'Lagan, Ministers; and the Laird of Glen-doick, Ruling Elder; and report to the Committee against Nine of the Clock To-morrow Forenoon: And, in Case the said Mr. Erskine refuse to give Satisfaction to the Synod, by acknowledging he was in the wrong, the Committee recommend to all the Members to have their Thoughts on these Particulars that gave Offence, against the said Meeting To-morrow Morning. And this Day the Committee having met, called for the Report of their Sub-committee, who report, That they met with Mr. Erskine, pursuant to the Appointment; and endeavoured to convince and satisfy him of the Inconveniency and Unlawfulness of several Expressions in his Sermon: Mr. Erskine told them, He was fatigued for Want of Sleep, and much Speaking, and unfit to enter upon any Argument: That after some Reasoning upon the Inconveniency and Unlawfulness of his Conduct, and when the Committee intended to have proceeded further in their Reasoning, and desired he would allow them a further Opportunity of conversing him for his Conviction; he told them,



It was in vain, for he was fixed. Thereafter it was enquired, If the Members of the Committee had prepared particular Notes of the Sermon that gave Offence, pursuant to the Appointment of the Committee. There was a Paper given in, containing several Expressions in Mr. Erskine's Sermon, with Remarks upon the same. The Committee took these Expressions, as contained in the Paper, under Consideration; and, after having made several Amendments upon the Expressions mentioned in the Paper, the Committee agreed to transmit the Expressions as amended, with the Remarks, to the Synod; but without giving any Judgment upon the Remarks, and leaving them to be considered by the Synod. The Synod having heard the Report of the Committee, as above, and the Paper containing Mr. Erskine's Expressions, and the Remarks made thereon; and not having Time to enter on the Affair just now, agreed to delay the same till their Meeting in the Afternoon.

*Eodem die, post meridiem.*

THE Synod again entering on the Affair relating to Mr. Erskine's Sermon; and having called for the Paper given in by the Committee to the Synod, Forenoon, containing the Expressions emitted by Mr. Erskine, and the Remarks thereon; and the same being produced, it was read; the Tenor whereof follows.

REMARKS



**REMARKS** upon a Sermon delivered by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine Minister at Stirling, at the Opening of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, upon the tenth Day of October, One thousand seven hundred and thirty two Years.

**T**HE Strain of a good Part of the said Sermon evidently appears to be, To compare the Ministers of this Church, with the most corrupt Teachers under the Old Testament, and in our Saviour's Days; in regard, *imo*, That, before he came to declaim upon the particular Corruptions and Degeneracies of the *Jewish* Priests, he premised this General, as Key to all that was to be said on that Head, namely, 'That he left it to the Consciences of every One, to judge, what of these Corruptions were to be found among ourselves at this Day.' *2do*, And, having charged the *Jewish* Preachers and Teachers with very great Corruptions, came at length to speak of their corrupt Notions of the Kingdom of the *Messias*; and then subjoined, That he might be allowed to say, that mistaken Notions of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ was the Ground of many Things that were wrong among us at this Day; which is a further Evidence, that, agreeable to the general Premise, he intended a Comparison all along. *3tio*, Nay, so fond he appeared to aggravate the Comparison, that he charges the *Jewish* Teachers, 'That they

‘ they, being connected with the Great, trampled upon the People as an unhallowed Mob;’ with an evident Design to hold forth what he judges to be the Character of the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland* at this Day: Whereas it is evident from the Scripture, that the *Jewish* Teachers, *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, did almost every Thing to be seen of Men, to have the Praise and Applause of Men, even of the Multitude; as appears from our Saviour’s mentioning Places of publick Resort and Concourse, when he charges them with these Things.

*Another Remark.*

When he was discoursing on the Head anent the Builders; after he had told, *That it was a great Crime to intrude into the Office without a Mission*; he said, ‘ That, in order to One’s being accounted a Builder, there were two Things necessary, the Call of God, and the Call of the Church: That they who had not the Call of the Church, should be looked upon as Thieves and Robbers; and that this Call ought not to be by the Heritors, or any other Set of Men, but by the whole Church; and refuses that any Minister had God’s Call, who had only a Call from the Heritors, or any other Set of Men:’ By which he excludes the whole Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, and himself among them, from having the Call of God; the Body of Christians having never been allowed to vote in the Election of a Minister.

*Another Remark.*

As a further Evidence that he thought a Call from the whole of the People absolutely necessary

fary; he alledged, 'That this was a natural Right that every Society had, to chuse Servants for themselves; and that it would be counted a great Bondage and Servitude upon any Family, if Foreigners were to chuse Servants for them; and that certainly the Church had a Power of chusing their own Ministers, seeing they were the freest Society upon Earth.'

*Another Remark.*

After he had spoke of the great Encroachments that had been made on Christ's Kingly Office in the Times of Popery and Prelacy; he said, 'That after the late wondrous Revolution, by which our Church was delivered, it might have been expected, that this Church would have given some Testimony against these Encroachments; but that he did not remember ever they had made an Act, asserting the Headship of our Lord Jesus Christ, since the Revolution.' By which at least he charges our Forefathers with a sinful Silence or Negligence.

*Another Remark.*

Speaking of the Encroachments that had been made upon Christ's Kingly Office, and the Rights of the People since the Revolution; he said, 'That a Cry had gone up to Heaven about these Things, in the Words of the Spouse, That *the Watchmen that went about the City, had found her, and taken away her Vail from her, and smote her*; That this Cry came before the Bar of the last General Assembly; but that, instead of redressing this and other Grievances, they increased them, by lodging the Power of Election in the Heritors and Elders, excluding the People; whereby Christ was deeply wounded in his Members. He farther added, That,



' whatever Church-authority there was in that  
 ' Act, there was nothing of the Authority of the  
 ' Head of the Church : That he was sure it had no  
 ' Foundation in Scripture, where there was no  
 ' Distinction in spiritual Matters made betwixt the  
 ' rich Man with the Gold Ring and gay Cloth-  
 ' ing, and the poor Man. And he concluded  
 ' with this, That if Christ were personally pre-  
 ' sent (and I being here, by Appointment of the  
 ' Synod, in his Stead) I say, were Christ per-  
 ' sonally present, he would say to you, *Foras-*  
 ' *much as you have done it to one of these little*  
 ' *Ones, you have done it to me.*'

In the End of his Discourse, he gave this Ad-  
 vice to Ministers, ' Not to be as dumb Dogs  
 ' when their Fellow-builders go wrong ; and, tho'  
 ' this will offend, yet he said he behoved to speak.'

The Synod taking all the above Notes under  
 Consideration ; and after Reasoning thereon, and  
 the Judgment of Members being enquired with  
 respect to the Expressions, delaying the Con-  
 sideration of the Remarks till afterwards, do  
 find that these Expressions, given in by the Com-  
 mittee, were uttered by Mr. *Erskine* in his Sermon  
 before them, or Words to the same Purpose.

Thereafter the Synod came to consider, if the  
 Expressions emitted by Mr. *Erskine* in his Ser-  
 mon are censurable ; and, after long Reasoning,  
 Mr. *Erskine* desired to be heard : And he being  
 heard at some Length, some Brethren desired  
 that the Reverend Synod may please to cause  
 read the Paper, containing the Expressions, he is  
 said to have emitted in his Sermon, in his Hear-  
 ing, which was done. After the Reading of  
 the said Paper, Mr. *Erskine* craved he may be  
 allowed a Double of it, in regard it is the first  
 Time



Time he has heard it; and that the Notes therein-contained, are not in Connection as he delivered them: and, the Paper being long, he cannot give Answers presently. The Synod considering the Demand, and, after some Reasoning, the Question was put, *Grant a Sight of the Minutes in the Clerk's Hands, or not?* Roll called, and Votes marked, it carried by Plurality in the Affirmative, *Grant: Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, allow Mr. Erskine a Sight of the Minutes by the Clerk, and delays that Affair till their Meeting To-morrow Forenoon.*

Perth, October *twelfth*, One thousand seven hundred and thirty two Years, ante meridiem.

THE Synod again entring on the Affair with respect to Mr. *Erskine*, the Clerk told, he allowed Mr. *Erskine* a Sight of the Minutes, according to the Synod's Appointment; and he, being present, told, That he had some Remarks to offer upon the Notes, which the Synod found to have been emitted by him. The Synod caused read these Notes separately, and Mr. *Erskine* read his Remarks upon each of them, and thereafter gave in his Paper to the Clerk of the Synod, sign'd. Mr. *Erskine* told, That, being in Haste, he finds he has omitted some Things, and craved back the Paper that he might write them down with his own Hand; and having retired, after a considerable Time, he returned with some Additions to his former Paper, which he likewise signed; and, after reading the same in open Synod, gave it in to the Clerk, which is as follows;

**ANSWERS to the REMARKS**  
*of the Synod of Perth and Stirling,*  
*upon a SERMON preached before*  
*them at Perth, the tenth Day of O-*  
*ctober, One thousand seven hundred*  
*and thirty two.*

**T**HE first Charge is, 'That the Strain of a great Part of the Sermon appears to compare the Ministers of this Church with the most corrupt Teachers under the Old Testament.' This Charge is not, nor cannot be proven by any Passages in my Discourse; for I know there is a great Body of faithful Ministers in the Church of *Scotland*, with whom I do not reckon myself worthy to be compared. As for the Particulars alledged to support this Charge, I shall only say, That I reckon it the Duty of every faithful Minister, when he is dispensing the pure Truths of God, to exhort his Hearers to make Application of what is said, to themselves; and I do not think Ministers themselves, when Hearers of the Word of God, are beyond such an Exhortation. As for what I advanced with relation to the mistaken Notions of the Kingdom of Christ, my Words were, 'I am perswaded, that carnal Notions of the Kingdom of Christ, which is not of this World, ly at the Bottom of many Evils and Corruptions of this Day.' This I own as a Truth, but do not think it proves the Charge, neither was it ever expressed by me with such a View. As to the third, Altho' I own the

*Jewish*

*Jewish* Builders affected Popularity as much, and perhaps more than any other Set of Men, while the People yielded an implicate Obedience to them; yet, whenever they thwarted their Inclinations, or discovered an Abhorrence of their vile Principles and Practices, they treated them as an unhallowed Mob, and ruled them with Rigor; as is evident from the Quotation in my Sermon, *John 7. 49. This People, who know not the Law, are cursed*; which cannot be simply understood of the Officers, but of the Body of the People attending Christ's Ministry, which was an Eye-sore to them. But now all this, or the other Particulars taken either separately or jointly, proves the Charge, is beyond my Comprehension.

As to the second *Remark*, when speaking of the Characters of the Workmen employed about the House of God, I adhere to my Notes on that Head, which I have not now Time to transcribe, as the Truths of God; but deny they infer the Charge of my looking upon all the Ministers of this Church as Thieves and Robbers; for I know that a vast many of them have both God's Call and the Church's Call: But, as for the violent Settlements that have taken Place since the Patronage-act, I cannot think upon them as warranted by the Word of God. As to the last Part of this *Remark*, That the Call of a Minister ought not to be by the Heritors, or any other Set of Men, and refused that any Minister had God's Call, who had only a Call from the Heritors, by which he evidently excludes the whole Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, and himself among them, from having the Call of God, the Body of Christians never having been  
allowed



allowed to vote in the Election of a Minister. I answer, I own, That the Call of a Minister ought not to be by Heritors, as such, in regard that no such Titles or Distinctions of Men are known in the Kingdom of Christ; the only Heritors there, are they that are rich in Faith, they being Heirs of the Kingdom; these are they that are precious in the Sight of God, and honourable. And I am of Opinion, That, in dispensing the Privileges of Christ's Kingdom, we ought to put Honour and Value upon Men, not upon the Account of their worldly Heritages, but as they are valuable in the Sight of God, and as his Image is to be found upon them. Upon the same *Remark*, I further add; That, as the Election of Ministers ought not to be by Heritors, as such, (far less these not of our Communion) nor any other Set of Men, but by the Church, and think I have good Reason to refuse that any Minister hath God's Call, who has only a Call from the Heritors, *renitente & contradicente Ecclesia*; yet notwithstanding, I do not hereby exclude the whole Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, nor myself among them, from having the Call of God; in regard that from the Revolution, till the Act of Patronage came to be in Force, I know of no Settlements, but where the Body of the Christian People concurred in the Election of their Minister; and in the Practice of the Church, till of late, they were allowed to vote; yea, to my certain Knowledge, in the South of *Scotland*, Presbyteries, and other Judicatories, with the Christian People, wrestled jointly for the Settlement of Congregations, in Opposition to malignant and disaffected Heritors

tors; but *tempora mutantur*. As to the latter Clause of this *Remark*, I adhere to my Notes underwritten. As to the next *Remark*, viz, That I charge my Forefathers with a sinful Silence or Negligence, because I said, I do not remember of any particular Act of Assembly since the Revolution, whereby the Rights of the Crown of Christ and his supreme Headship in the Church is asserted, in Opposition to the Encroachments that were made upon it, in the late Times of Persecution and Tyranny. I answer, Altho' I have a very great Regard to the Instruments of our Deliverance at the Revolution; particularly the godly Ministers, who survived the Flood of persecuting Tyranny, and my own Father amongst the rest; yet I hope the Reverend Synod will excuse me, tho' I do not look upon these worthy Ministers, or these that have succeeded them to this Day, as infallible: But, if the Reverend Synod can shew me where the Headship and Sovereignty of Christ has been asserted by any particular Act of Assembly, since the Revolution, in Opposition to these Encroachments, I shall very willingly own my Mistake; but, if not, I humbly move, That the Reverend Synod may address the ensuing Assembly for supplying that Defect.

As to the last *Remark*, concerning the Act of Assembly, lodging the Power of Election in Heritors and Elders: I cannot, and dare not, retract my Testimony against it, either before the Assembly the Day after it was past into an Act, nor by what I said in my Sermon before this Reverend Synod; in regard I cannot see the Authority of the King of Zion giving Warrant to

confer the Power of voting in the Election of Ministers upon Heritors beyond other Christians; especially when, in the said Act, Heritors, disaffected both to Church and State, are put upon a Level with those of our Communion: And I shall be sorry, if this Act of our Assembly be made a Term of our Ministerial Communion.

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

The foresaid Paper being written in Haste, I add, for clearing my Answer to the second Remark, That the Words of my Sermon, which I emitted, were not uttered as in the Remark, but as follows; 'None can warrantably lay a Stone in this Building, except he be regularly called: What Mason will put his Hand to a Building, except he be imployed by these that have Warrant to call him? This is a Thing so necessary, that Christ himself would not meddle in building his Father's House, till he had his Father's Call; *No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron. So likewise Christ glorified not himself to be made an high Priest, but he that said to him, Thou art my Son, this Day I have begotten thee, Heb. 5. 5.* There is a twofold Call necessary for a Man's meddling as a Builder in the Church of God; There is the Call of God, and of his Church. God's Call consists in his qualifying a Man for the Work, and inspiring him with a holy Zeal and Desire to imploy these Qualifications for the Glory of God, and Good of his Church; The Call of the Church lies in the free Call and Election of the Christian People. The Promise of Conduct



duct and Counsel in the Choice of Men that  
 are to build, is not made to Patrons, Heritors,  
 or any other Set of Men, but to the Church,  
 the Body of Christ, to whom Apostles, Pro-  
 phets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are  
 given. As it is a natural Privilege for every  
 House, or Society of Men, to have the Choice  
 of their own Servants or Officers ; so it is the  
 Privilege of the House of God in a particular  
 Manner. What a miserable Bondage would it  
 be reckoned for any Family to have Stewards  
 or Servants imposed on them by Strangers,  
 who might give the Children a Stone for Bread,  
 or a Scorpion instead of a Fish, Poison instead  
 of Medicine ? and shall we suppose that ever  
 God granted a Power to any Set of Men, Pa-  
 trons, Heritors, or whatever they be, a Power  
 to impole Servants on his Family without their  
 own Consent, they being the freest Society in  
 the World ? As to the penult *Remark*, my  
 Words were, to the best of my Remembrance,  
 If Christ were personally present, where I am  
 by the Synod's Appointment in his Stead, he  
 would say in Reference to that Act, *Inasmuch*  
*as ye have done it to one of the least of these*  
*little Ones, ye did it to me.* And that I am  
 positive I uttered not these Words in the *Re-*  
*mark, to you ;* which, if I had done in Refe-  
 rence to the Synod, it had been impertinent.

As to the last, These Words in the *Remark*  
 with Relation to the *dumb Dogs*, Tho' this  
 should offend, yet he would speak. My Words  
 were to this Purpose, 'That when we saw Dan-  
 ger coming to the Church, or our Fellow-  
 builders going wrong, we were to warn them

of it like faithful Watchmen, even tho' they should be offended, there was no Help for that ; if this Advice had been to faithful Builders, it had been nonfensical.

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

The Synod, after hearing Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine's* Paper of *Remarks*, and not having Time to proceed any further in that Affair just now, they delay they same till their Meeting in the Afternoon.

*Eodem die, post meridiem.*

The Synod again entring on the Affair anent Mr. *Erskine's* Sermon, and having again caused read the Notes the Synod found to have been uttered by him in his Sermon, and Mr. *Erskine's* Paper containing his Remarks thereon : It was proposed, if the Affair be fully before the Synod, that they may pass Judgment thereon. And, the Members being enquired, it was agreed, that the Affair was fully before them. The Synod taking the whole complex Case under their serious Consideration, and the Members being heard Reasoning at great Length on the Notes uttered by Mr. *Erskine* in his Sermon, and likewise Mr. *Erskine* heard fully as to what he had to say ; in the Course of Reasoning Mr. *Erskine* alleged, That Mr. *Adam Fergusson* at *Killin* has accused him of departing from the Standard of this Church ; he craved, that seeing he is publicly arraigned with a departing from the Standard of this Church by the said Mr. *Fergusson*, he may be obliged, by this Synod, to make good

good his Charge: And thereupon he took Instruments.

It having been objected, ' That Mr. *James Fisher* Minister at *Kinclaven* cannot vote in the ' Affair relating to Mr. *Erskine*, in regard Mr. *Erskine* is his Father-in-law.' And Mr. *Fisher* being heard, the Synod judged he cannot vote in that Affair. After long Reasoning, as said is, the Question was put, If or not Mr. *Erskine* be censurable on the Account of the Expressions he emitted in his Sermon before the Synod?

Then the Vote was stated, *Censurable, or not?* Rolls called, and Votes marked, it carried by Plurality, *Censurable: Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, judge the said Mr. Erskine censurable on the Account of the Expressions he emitted in his Sermon before the Synod.* Whereupon Mr. *Alexander Moncrieff* did, in his own Name, and in Name of all that would adhere to him, protest against, and dissent from the foresaid Sentence, and promised to give in Reasons in due Time, and thereupon took Instruments in the Clerk's Hands. To which Dissent Mr. *Wilson*, Mr. *Gillespie*, Mr. *Bowis*, Mr. *M'Intosh*, Baillie *Gib*, Mr. *Coventrie*, Mr. *Brugh*, Mr. *Halay*, Mr. *Frier*, Mr. *Ramsay*, Mr. *Gow* and *John Beaton* adhered; also Mr. *Meik*, present Moderator, having left the Chair, told, he adhered to the foresaid Dissent: Then Mr. *Mackie*, who was lately Moderator, was desired to take the Chair.

Mr. *Fisher* protested against the foresaid Sentence, not only as prejudicial to Mr. *Erskine*, but as injurious to the Truths of God's Word, and appealed to the next ensuing General Assembly.



bly, and promised to give in Reasons in due Time, and thereupon took Instruments in the Clerk's Hands. Also the said *Mr. Erskine* protested against the foresaid Sentence, and appeal'd to the next General Assembly; and protested, That all further Procedure against him be stopt, and Extracts may be allowed him, Papers transmitted, and Parties to be cited, and promised to give in Reasons of his Appeal in due Time, and thereupon took Instruments. Thereafter the Synod came to consider, if the Protestations and Appeals taken, as above, should stop the Synod as to any further Procedure in the Affair at the Time; they found, that these Appeals, taken before compleating of the Sentence, cannot stop their Procedure. Then the Synod taking under serious Consideration what Censure to inflict; and after Reasoning the Synod came to this Question, *Rebuke Mr. Erskine, and admonish him to behave orderly for the future; and appoint the Presbytery of Stirling to enquire anent his After-behaviour at their privy Censures, and report to the next Synod?* Then the Vote was stated, *Approve of the Motion, or not?* Rolls called, and Votes marked, it carried, *nemine contradicente*, Approve: *Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, approve of the Censure; and appoints the Moderator to call Mr. Erskine, and rebuke, and admonish him accordingly; and the Presbytery of Stirling to enquire anent his Behaviour in Time coming at their privy Censures, and report to them at their next Meeting. And further, They appoint the Clerk to write to the Presbytery of Stirling*  
*what*

what the Synod have enjoined them in Reference to Mr. Erskine, and that as soon as may be. But the Synod finding that Mr. Erskine was not in the House, resolved, that if he be in the House To-morrow, to call him up to be rebuked; and, if he should not be present To-morrow, they resolve to call him up at their Meeting in April next, to rebuke and admonish him in Terms of the Sentence. The Synod delays to hear Mr. Fergusson Minister at Killin making Answer to the Protestation taken against him till To-morrow that Mr. Erskine be present, and they agree that it be the first Affair they take in.

Perth, the Thirteenth Day of October, One thousand seven hundred and Thirty two Years, ante meridiem.

**M**R. Fergusson at Killin desiring to be heard on the Pretestation taken against him by Mr. Erskine Yesternight; Compeared Mr. James Fisher, and produced a Commission from the said Mr. Erskine to appear in this Matter for him, which was read and sustained. Then the Protestation was read; and Mr. Fisher being heard, as also Mr. Fergusson explaining himself as to what he emitted in the Course of Reasoning on the Affair of Mr. Erskine, thereafter they were removed. And the Synod taking the Affair under Consideration, and, after Reasoning, agreed, That Mr. Fergusson has given them Satisfaction, and therefore they dismiss the Affair. Parties being called in, this was intimated to them: Whereupon Mr. Fisher protested, That

That *Mr. Erskine* is assolizied from any Thing that could be imported in the Expression exhibited by *Mr. Fergusson*, as his charging *Mr. Erskine* of having departed from the Standards of this Church, for Reasons to be given in in due Time; and thereupon took Instruments in the Clerk's Hands.

There being a Paper given in by *Mr. Alexander Moncrieff* in his own Name, and in Name of all these that adhered to him in the Dissent Yesternight, which was read; and the Synod finding that it contains some Reasons of the said Dissent, could not enter it into the Minutes, in regard of a late Act of Assembly, discharging Reasons of Dissent to be recorded; but allows the same to be kept *in retentis* by their Clerk. After reading of the Minutes, *Mr. Erskine* was called up, in order to be rebuked and admonished; but he not compearing, the Synod adhere to their former Resolve, to wit, That he be rebuked at next Synod. Extracted by

PAT. WYLIE, *Cls. Syn.*

*At Stirling the Tenth Day of April, One thousand seven hundred and thirty three Years, post meridiem.*

THE Synod having entred on reading of the Minutes of the last Synod, with respect to *Mr. Erskine*, the Presbytery of *Stirling* desired that the Reverend Synod may please to appoint a Committee of their Number to commune with them on that Affair; which the Synod considering, and after some Reasoning, they granted the Desire; and, to that Effect, they appoint Masters *Michael Potter, James Mercer, James Faichney,*



*Faichney, James Mackie, Peter Pilmor, John Drummond, Archibald Napier, Patrick Du-  
chal, William Simpson, Andrew Ure, Mini-  
sters; with Mr. Henry Lindsay Moderator, and  
Correspondents, to wit, Masters James Hodge,  
David Hunter and James Rob.*

*Stirling, April eleventh, One thousand seven  
hundred and thirty three Years, ante meri-  
diem.*

**T**HE Committee report, they met, and  
communed with the Presbytery of *Stir-  
ling* anent the Affair of *Mr. Erskine* according  
to Appointment, and have nothing to offer to  
the Synod in Reference to that Matter.

*At Stirling, April Twelfth, One thousand seven  
hundred and thirty three Years, ante meri-  
diem.*

**T**HE Synod proceeded to read the Minutes  
of the last Synod in Reference to *Mr. Er-  
skine*. *Mr. Alexander Moncrief*, having en-  
tred a Dissent last Synod in the Affair of *Mr.  
Erskine*, gave in Reasons thereof at the Synod-  
table, signed by himself, and several Brethren  
who adhered to the same. After reading of the  
Minutes of the last Synod, in Reference to the  
Affair of *Mr. Erskine*, and after Reasoning, a  
Motion was made, that some Brethren be sent to  
commune with him; which the Synod having  
agreed to, they appoint *Mr. Potter, Mr. Faich-  
ney, Mr. Rob*, Ministers; and the Laird of *Til-  
libody* Ruling Elder, to retire presently, and  
con-

commune with him accordingly : And, after some little Space, the Committee that retired to commune with Mr. *Erskine*, having returned, told they have no Report to make, but that the Synod may execute their Sentence in the Terms of their Appointment in the most peaceable Way they can. Mr. *Erskine* being called, and compearing, and the Synod going to execute their Sentence in the Terms of their Appointment ; he told, he adhered to his Appeal. Extracted by

PATR. WYLIE, *Cls. Syn.*

Stirling, April *twelfth*, One thousand seven hundred and thirty three Years, post meridiem.

THE Synod being met, severals of the Elders of the Kirk-session of *Stirling* compearing, craved, That the Petition they gave in to the Committee for Bills may be taken in by the Reverend Synod, read, and considered. The Committee for Bills told, They did not transmit the Petition, in regard it was for reversing the Synod's Sentence in reference to Mr. *Erskine*, but left it to the Synod to do in that Matter as they should think fit. The said Elders being heard giving their Reasons for reading the Petition ; and craving, That the Synod's Sentence in reference to Mr. *Erskine* may be reversed. Thereafter they were removed ; and the Synod taking the Affair under Consideration, and after much Reasoning anent receiving the Petition, a Vote was flated ; *If or not a Petition offer'd by some Elders of the Session of Stirling, craving*

*craving, That the Synod may reverse their own Sentence against Mr. Erskine, as is informed by the Committee for Bills, and craved by the Elders at the Bar, shall be read, even after Mr. Erskine, notwithstanding all the Pains taken upon him by the Synod, has adhered to his Appeal in the Cause to the next ensuing General Assembly of this National Church?*

A second State of a Vote was proposed;

*Receive and read the Petition offered by the Elders of Stirling, or not?* Then the Question was put, Whether the first or second shall be the State of the Vote? Rolls called, and Votes marked, it carried by Plurality, That the first shall be the State of the Vote.

Then the Vote was stated, *Read the Petition in that Shape, or not?* Rolls called, and Votes marked, it carried by a great Plurality, *Not read the Petition.* Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, refuse to read the said Petition offered by some of the Elders of *Stirling*, craving, That the Synod may reverse their own Sentence against Mr. *Erskine*. as is informed by the Committee of Bills, and craved by the Elders at the Bar, even after Mr. *Erskine*, notwithstanding all the Pains taken on him by the Syond, adhered to his Appeal in the Cause to the next General Assembly, to meet the first *Thursday* of *May* next to come.

Parties being called in, the Premisses were intimated to them. Extracted by PATR. WYLIE, *Cls. Syn.*

**DISSENT** given in by Mr. Moncrieff  
to the Synod, met at Perth the 13th  
of October 1732.

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UPON the Synod's coming to this Sentence, Mr. Moncrieff represented, That having moved, before the Question was put, that the State of the Vote, *Censurable or not*, might be explained; and having signified, that if it meant nothing else, but that the Reverend Mr. *Erskine* had made use of some Expressions too strong, that might possibly, tho' not in the Speaker's Intention, give some Ground of Offence, it tending most, in several Cases, to the Peace of the Church, for which he has the greatest Regard, to express Truths, tho' seasonably advanced, in modest Terms; he was not, the Vote being so understood, to differ from others of his Brethren, who thought he might be dealt with to acknowledge so much, or have it intimate to him in a brotherly Way, that this was the Opinion of the Synod: But, if, by finding Mr. *Erskine* censurable, it be understood to be the Mind of the Synod, that Mr. *Erskine* was censurable by any Rule of this Church, for giving it as his Opinion in his Sermon, *That the Act of Assembly One thousand seven hundred and thirty two Years, importing, That Heritors, as such, being Protestant; tho' not of our Communion, and Enemies to our excellent Constitution both in Church and State, have an equal Right with Elders, and that without Consent of the Christian People of vacant Congregations, to elect their Ministers, is not agreeable to the Word of God, our Standards, and received Principles*; he could not but own in that Case, that it is his Judgment, That Mr. *Erskine* is not censurable. But several Members of the Synod having, upon this Motion, declared that they looked on him as censurable,

not

not only for the Manner of Expression, but the Matter ; and the said Mr. *Moncrieff* not inclining to spend the Synod's Time in pleading for a double State of a Vote, or that this is his Meaning, and of others concurring with him, should be marked in the Minutes, before putting of the Question, if it were only remembered by the Reverend Synod, that this was advanced by him and others as their Meaning in voting Mr. *Erskine* not censurable ; he doth therefore, in the Sense and Meaning above-expressed, in his own Name, and in the Name of all who shall adhere unto him, dissent from the Vote of the Reverend Synod, *Finding Mr. Erskine censurable*, for Reasons to be given in in due Time ; and thereupon takes Instruments in the Clerk's Hands.

That this is a true Double of a Paper of Dissent given in by the Reverend Mr. *Alexander Moncrieff* Minister of the Gospel at *Abernethy*, to the very Reverend Synod of *Perth and Stirling*, met at *Perth* the thirteenth Day of *October*, One thousand seven hundred and thirty two Years, is attested by

PAT. WYLIE, *Cls. Syn.*



REASONS of APPEAL by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine Minister of Stirling, from the Sentence of the Reverend Synod of Perth and Stirling, declaring him censurable, to the Ve-

*nerable Assembly of the Church of  
Scotland, to meet at Edinburgh, May  
One thousand seven hundred  
and thirty three.*

**M**R. Erskine, according to Course, having preached at the Opening of the Synod at *Perth*, *October* tenth, One thousand seven hundred and thirty two, from that Text, *Psal.* 118. 22. *The Stone which the Builders rejected, the same is made the Head-stone of the Corner*; he, according to the Purpose of the Text, could not shun to lay open the Corruptions of the *Jewish Builders*, as Beacons to the present Generation, that they might not dash upon the same Church-ruining Rock; which he did, without stating a Comparison betwixt them and any Set of Men in the World: And being, quite contrary to his Inclination, put in the *Chair* at *Stirling*, and therefore obliged to preach before the Synod at *Perth*, he found himself under a Necessity, by vertue of his Commission from God, and in an Agreeableness to the commendable Acts and Constitutions of this Church in former Times, to be free and faithful in declaring what he looked upon as a Departure from the *Corner-stone*, whereby any other Church, as well as that of the *Jews*, might be in Danger of Ruin from the Lord; and this Method he judged to be his Safety before God, his own Conscience, and all unbiaſſed Persons: But, to his great Surprise, the same Day, at the Opening of the Afternoon's Meeting, as tho' he had vented some notorious Heresy, his

Ser-



Sermon is attack'd, a Committee appointed to take the same to Consideration, and report to the next *Sederunt*, which accordingly was done : And, after long Debates, till the *third* Day of the Synod's Meeting, about *Ten* at Night, the *Question* was put, *If, or not, Mr. Erskine is censurable on the Account of the Expressions he emitted in his Sermon?* when it carried, by a scrimp Majority, *Censurable*.

It is with no small Concern that I must appear at the Bar of the *Venerable Assembly*, as an *Appellant* from the Sentence of the Reverend Synod, whereof I am a Member ; yet it is a considerable Alleviation, that *Twelve* of my *Reverend Brethren*, and *two* Ruling Elders, were so much convinced of the Injustice done me, as to *dissent* from the Deed of the Synod, against which I found myself obliged to *protest*, and flee to the *Venerable Assembly*, for Redress of the Injustice I humbly conceive is done me, before whom I lay my following *Reasons of Appeal*,

*imo*, Altho' the Appellant gave no Occasion of Irritation to any Member of the Synod, during the *three Days Debate* ; yet he found the *Spirits* of the *prevailing Party* of his Judges so *biassed* and *imbittered*, that he did not think Men of their *present Temper* capable of judging *impartially* in his Cause. They knew very well I was a *Stranger* lately come within their Bounds, which, according to the Rules both of natural and revealed Religion, bound them to *Humanity* and *Civility*, especially when standing upon the Matter as a Pannel at their Bar, willing to submit to any Censure, *clearly* founded on the *Word of God*, or the *Rules* of this Church. But  
such

such *hard Names* and Speeches were past in the Course of Reasoning, as plainly discovered a Bias and Ferment, and that, not against me only, but against the grave and honourable Audience before whom I had preached: But I forbear to be more *particular*, unless I be obliged to it before the Bar of the *Assembly*. I shall only add, as an Evidence of the *Keeness* of their Spirits, that they were going on (as is plain from the Minutes) to judge the *Appellant censurable*, before ever they allowed him to *see or hear* a material *Libel* they had formed against him; and this Favour was not allowed him when he demanded it, without a great Struggle and the *Solemnity of a Vote*; and when the Favour was granted; all that was allowed, is only to see the *Remarks* in the Clerk's Hands, and no more Time for forming Answers to their long Paper, than from *Wednesday* at Eleven or Twelve at Night, till Ten of the Clock on *Thursday*: And, when the *precise* Hour was come, one Message is sent me after another, to attend the Synod, tho' they wanted not other Business, the *Minutes* of the last Synod not being all this Time *entred upon*, so *hot and fiery* were they in the *Chase*.

2do, This Method of Procedure has an evident Tendency to gag and shut the Mouths of such, as God has ordered to *cry aloud, and not to spare, to lift up their Voice like a Trumpet, and to tell the House of Judah and Israel their Transgressions*. Ministers are *Ambassadors for Christ*, and are obliged to bespeak their Hearers with as great Freedom, as tho' *Christ* were *personally present*, or speaking with an audible Voice from Heaven, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Heb. 12. 25. And, if he deliver no-  
thing

thing but the *Truths of God*, he is to charge them, in the *Name of the great God*, to make *Application*: But here I am judicially sifted before the Bar of the Synod, for desiring every one of my Hearers to judge, whether any of the Sins and Corruptions of the *Jewish Builders* were to be found in the *Day* wherein we live; which Method, in my Opinion, smells of the Spirits of those who required the Prophets to preach *smoother Things*, and *prophecy Deceit*. A Watchman must exoner himself upon the Peril of his Soul: 'Tis true, he ought not *knowingly* to sound a *false Alarm*; But, whether is it safer for the *City*, to have a *false Alarm* founded upon an apprehended Danger, or to have the Mouth of the Watchman *stop*, that he cannot sound an Alarm when the Danger is *real*, and the *City* falling into the Hands of the Enemy?

3tio, The Reverend Synod judge the *Appellant* censurable for his *Expressions*, without *con-  
descending upon any Part of the Word of God,  
Standards of Doctrine*, or what Branch of the Government of the Church he had receded from, as is evident from the Paper of *Remarks* itself; yea, so far were they from pretending that he had departed from the *Standards* of the Church, that when a *Brother*, in the Course of Reasoning, had asserted, *That the Appellant had departed from the Standards of the Church*, the Synod allowed him; to wit, the *Appellant*, to *protest* against that *Brother*, that he should be obliged to make good his Charge; and accordingly the said *Brother* was called to the Bar, and the *Appellant* allowed to insist by his *Proxy* against him, until he had *satisfied for the Offence*; which  
the



the Synod would never have done, if they thought that *Mr. Erskine* had emitted any Thing *inconsistent* with the Word of God, or our approved Standards: Yea, tho' *Mr. Erskine* frequently insisted in open Synod, That they should condescend upon the Errors he had vented, or the Articles of our Standards he had departed from; yet this was never done, as appears from the *Extract* of the Synod's Procedure. And I submit it to the *Venerable Assembly* to judge, if it is just and equal Dealing, to condemn any Man for a *Multitude* of Expressions *in cumulo*, without shewing the *particular Rules* which he has transgressed. 'Tis true, it was cast up in the Course of Reasoning, That the *Appellant* had transgressed the *Law of Love and Charity*, by taking Notice of some of the particular Evils of the Day: But this is a very unjust Alledgance, if it be considered, That a Minister of Christ discovers the greatest Love to his own Soul, and to the Generation, when he gives faithful Warning from God, that People may not rush upon God's Neck, and the *thick Bosses of his Buckler*.

420, What is above advanced, will be yet more clear, if it be considered, That when my Expressions are viewed *abstractly* from the Committee's *Remarks and Inferences*, which the *Synod disowned as none of theirs*, they appear to be *inoffensive*, even as the Committee states them; but, when viewed as *stated in my written Defence*, or as *they stood in the Delivery*, they are, not only *inoffensive*, but either *Scriptural*, or natively founded on Scripture: For Instance, *imo*, When speaking of the Corruptions of the *Jewish Church*, what was there criminal, in *leaving it*

to Hearers to judge whether any such Corruptions were to be found in our Day? Yet this is adduced as a Proof, that I run the Parallel between the corrupt Teachers of the Jewish, and the present Ministry of the Church of Scotland; tho' it be declared in my written Defence, *That I know there is a Body of faithful Ministers in this Church, with whom I don't reckon myself worthy to be compared.* I was far from making such an Application of my Text to the Synod of Perth, as Peter did to the Jewish Sanhedrim, *Acts 4. The Stone which is rejected by you Builders, the same is become the Head-stone of the Corner.* 2do, Another of my Expressions was, *That mistaken Notions of the Kingdom of Christ, lay at the Bottom of many Things wrong in our Day; And is this censurable?* when we find the Disciples themselves in the Mist about the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, and falling into Mistakes from this Principle. 3tio, Am I censurable, for saying, *That the Jewish Builders trampled upon the People who attended Christ's Ministry as an unhallowed Mob?* when 'tis plain, from the Scripture I adduced, they pronounce an *Anathema* against them, saying, *That this People, who know not the Law, are accursed:* I hope the Reverend Synod will never justify them in this Matter. 4to, I am quarrelled for saying, (as it is stated in the Remarks) *That they who come into the Ministry without the Call of the Church, are but Thieves and Robbers.* But, let the whole Period be put together, as I uttered it, and as it is exprest in my written Defence; and I believe it will abide the Touchstone. 5to, Of the same Nature is the next Expression

pression, to wit, *That it is the natural Right of every Family or Society of Men to chuse their own Servants or Stewards, &c.* as in my Paper of Defence, to which I refer. 610, Was it a Thing criminal or censurable in me to say, *That I did not remember of any particular Act since the Revolution, asserting the Headship of Christ, in Opposition to the Innovations and Encroachments that were made upon it, in the Times of Persecution and Tyranny?* I do not deny but the Headship of Christ is asserted in our Confession of Faith, and *en passant* in some other Acts of Assembly; but these I humbly conceive were not Acts *a propos*, and did not answer the Design in Opposition to the open Indignities and Affronts done to the Sovereignty of the Son of God over his Church in these Times, when the Crown was sacrilegiously taken off his Head, and set upon the Head of a persecuting Apostate. The Parliament of England and Scotland, at the Restoration of King Charles, judged it necessary to assert his Right and Prerogative, in Opposition to the Usurpations of Oliver Cromwell, by particular and express Acts: And, had not our Assemblies much more Reason to assert the Prerogative and Headship of our dear Redeemer, in Opposition to the sacrilegious Usurpations of King Charles, who by Act of Parliament had been declared *supreme Head*, not only of all Causes Civil, but Ecclesiastick, and thereupon the Oath of Supremacy imposed and taken?

510, As to the Expressions I emitted in Relation to the Act of Assembly 1732, which the Synod find Fault with; As I said in my Answers,

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I cannot, nor dare not, retract my Testimony against the said Act: And that, imo, Because the Synod, according to the Method of their Procedure against me, seemed to look upon this Act as a *Term of Ministerial Communion*; which it can by no Means be, in regard it had no Being when the Appellant, or any other Minister admitted to the Ministry before its Enactment, were ordained: And, if this Act be a *Term of Ministerial Communion*, why not other Acts? And so we shall have as many *Terms* of Communion, as there are Acts of Assembly.

There is no Act of Assembly declaring this present Act a Part of our Standards, or declaring it unlawful for Ministers to preach against it: Our Form of Church-Government is no doubt a Badge of Distinction between our Church and Episcopacy or Independency, to which Form I adhere; but, to imagine all Acts of Assembly to be Standards of Discipline, is to enslave our Consciences to the Humors or rash Decisions of Men, who sometimes (as in the present Case) outwearied with contentious Debates, seem to agree to Regulations contrary to the Mind of their Constituents, and the deliberate Opinion of the diffused Church given in by their Instructions to the Assembly. It is alledged, "That, by subscribing the Formula, I am engaged not to preach against any Act of Assembly:" But this can have no Manner of Weight, in regard it cannot be supposed, that any thinking Man ever engaged to be subject (as was said) to all Acts of Assembly that might take Place after his Subscription, unless they were agreeable unto, and founded upon, the Word of God; for this

were to take it for granted, that the Church is infallible, and were a binding the Consciences of Men to an *implicite Obedience*; which I am very sure was never the *Intendment* of our Engagements by the *Formula*. Our Subjection to *Judicatories* is only *in the Lord*, from which no Argument can be adduced for a *sinful Silence*, as to Acts and Constitutions, which seem to us to be *against Christ's Interest* and Authority over his Church. This will be further evident, if it be considered, 2<sup>do</sup>, That this *Act*, for preaching against which I am quarrelled by the Synod, appears to me, not only to have *no Warrant* from the Authority of the great Head and King of the Church, but inconsistent with the *Method of Election* in the *Apostolical Church*, recorded, *Acts* 1, 6, and 14. Chapters; inconsistent with the Power and Talent of *trying the Spirits* of true and false *Prophets*, and of *discerning the Voice of the Shepherd*, given by Christ, not simply to the *Wise, Noble and Mighty*, but even to the *Poor of this World*, whom he hath generally chosen, *rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom*; inconsistent with that *Impartiality* which the Lord requires of his *Ministers and Courts* in the Affairs of his Kingdom, where the *rich Man*, or the *Man with the gay Clothing*, hath no Manner of *Predecency* to the *poor Man*, or him with the *vile Raiment*, *Jam.* 2. at the Beginning. What a dangerous Thing is it for any Church to cast out, or cast off, any of the *Lord's little Ones*, and give their Rights and Privileges to the *World's great Ones*, as such? In fine, I think it inconsistent with the *Principles and Practice* of the best Reformed Churches,

ches, declared in their *publick Confessions of Faith*, and particularly *with the known Principles of this Church* since the Reformation, asserted in her *Books of her Discipline*, which we are bound by *Solemn Covenant* to maintain. I shall only add, I am firmly perswaded, if a timely Remedy be not provided, *this Act* will very soon terminate in the *utter Ruin* of a *faithful Ministry* in the *Church of Scotland*, in regard that the *Power of electing Ministers* is thereby *principally* lodged in the Hands of a *Set of Men*, who are generally disaffected to the Power of Godliness, and avowed Enemies to the Doctrine, Discipline, Worship and Government of the *Church of Scotland*, as well as professed Enemies to the Government of our Sovereign King George, and the Succession in his Family.

*For all which Reasons it is expected, from the Equity of the Venerable Assembly, that they will reverse the Sentence of the Synod, and declare, I am not censurable for any of these Expressions quarrelled by them in my Sermon.*

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

Mr. James Fisher adheres to the above Reasons as the Ground of his Appeal from the Sentence of the Synod, Finding Mr. Erskine censurable for some Expressions emitted by him in a Sermon before them.

JA. FISHER.

ADDI



**ADDITIONAL REASONS of AP-  
PEAL**, by Mr. James Fisher Mini-  
ster at Kinclaven, from the Sentence  
of the Reverend Synod of Perth and  
Stirling, Finding Mr. *Erskine* censu-  
rable for some Expressions emitted by  
him in his Sermon at the Opening of  
the said Synod,

T O

The Venerable Assembly of the Church of  
*Scotland*, to meet at *Edinburgh* the  
Day of May, One thousand seven hundred  
and thirty three Years.

**T**HE Reverend Synod having refused me  
the Privileges of a Member in this pre-  
sent Question, because of my *Relation*  
to Mr. *Erskine*, there was no other Method left  
me of obtaining Redress, but by *appealing* to  
the *Venerable Assembly*.

Mr. *Erskine*, in his *Reasons of Appeal*, to  
which I have also *adhered*, has offered several  
Arguments for justifying his Conduct in fleeing  
to the Assembly for Relief of the Injustice done  
him by the Reverend Synod, which I hope will  
have Weight with that *Venerable Body*: But,  
besides what he has justly advanced in his own  
Defence, I thought it my Duty to *add* the follow-  
ing Reasons of my Appeal, which I humbly  
submit

submit to the Consideration of the Venerable Assembly ;

*Imo*, Altho' the Reverend Synod did not adopt the *Committee's Remarks* as *theirs*, but pretended to found their Sentence upon the *Expressions* emitted by Mr. *Erskine* in his Sermon ; yet it was plain from the Whole of their Reasoning, that the Sentence was grounded upon Mr. *Erskine's Intention and Design* in these quarrelled Expressions, and not upon the *Expressions themselves* : For, excepting what Mr. *Erskine* laid in Reference to the *Act of Assembly 1732*, (which shall be afterwards considered) there is not any of the *quarrelled Propositions*, when viewed abstractly from the strained Inferences and Glosses of the Committee, that can be the Foundation of any Censure whatsoever ; as Mr. *Erskine* himself has shown in the *fourth Reason* of his Appeal. Now, was it ever heard, that any Court proceeded to Censure upon the *secret Intention and Design of the Speaker* ? Is it not a received *Maxim*, That no Man ought to be condemned for Consequences drawn from his Doctrine, when he disclaims them ? But it is plain from Mr. *Erskine's written Answers*, That he disowns the Meaning put upon his Expressions, and the Inferences drawn from them, in the Committee's Remarks ; when he says, *That there is a Body of faithful Men in the Church of Scotland, with whom he is not worthy to be compared, who, he doubts not, have God's Call, as well as the Call of the Church, to the sacred Office of the Ministry* ; which is all that can be warrantably said by any Man of reasonable Charity : I therefore humbly submit it to the Judgment

ment of the *Venerable Assembly*, If, in Matters of Doctrine, which are to be the Foundation of Censure, any Man can be justly condemned for a *Meaning* put upon his Words, which they do not obviously bear: Is it not vastly more agreeable to the *Law of Love and Charity*, which *thinketh no Evil*, to put as favourable a Construction upon Mens Words as they can possibly admit of?

2do, Altho' Mr. Erskine gave in written Answers to the Committee's Remarks, in which, at the same Time, he stated the quarrelled Expressions in their *true Light* as he emitted them, and explained what he meant by them; yet the Synod did not take his Answers so far under their Consideration, as to declare (after reading of them) whether they were *satisfied* with them or not: Whereas it would have been but a Piece of material Justice, to have impartially considered what he advanced, for *alleviating* the Charge brought against him; yet this was never done, as appears by the *Extract of the Process*; but, on the Contrary, every Expression is screw'd up to the worst and most uncharitable Meaning, and whatever was said for his Exculpation entirely overlookt.

3tio, This Sentence of the Synod is founded on disjointed Expressions and scattered Phrases collected out of Mr. Erskine's Sermon, as every one's Memory best served him, without considering the Connection in which they stood in his Discourse: Now, the most valuable Truths may appear in the Shape of abominable Fallhoods, when treated in this Manner; nor is any Man  
safe



safe in the Delivery of a Discourse, if broken Sentences, here and there, be made the Foundation of a Libel against him.

4<sup>to</sup>, The only Ground, upon which Mr. Erskine could be found censurable, with any tolerable Shew of Reason, was his speaking against the Act of Assembly 1732; But I beg Leave to say, That the Reverend Synod did considerable Injury to Truth, and to our Constitution founded thereon, when they judged Mr. Erskine censurable upon that Score: For, 1<sup>mo</sup>, They hereby declare Mr. Erskine censurable for speaking against a human Constitution, which was never pretended (even by the keenest Patrons of it) to have the least Shadow of a Warrant from the Word of God, but is plainly contrary thereto; as appears by all these Arguments quoted by Mr. Erskine in his last Reason of Appeal, which have been enlarged upon with great Evidence, by most eminent Hands, both Ancient and Modern, and were never called in Question by any of this Church, till of late. 2<sup>do</sup>, By this Sentence of the Synod, finding Mr. Erskine Censurable for speaking against an Act, which is not pretended to be founded on the Word of God, it is impossible for any Man to subscribe the Confession of Faith with a safe Conscience: For, Chap. 31. Sect. 3. we subscribe our Belief of this Proposition, That, 'The Decrees and Determinations of Synods and Councils (N. B.) If consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with Reverence and Submission.' From whence it undeniably follows, That, if these Decrees are not consonant to the Word, they are not to be received or submitted unto; as is plain from the

*next Paragraph of the said Chapter of the Confession, 'All Synods and Councils since the Apostles Times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the Rule of Faith or Practice.' If it be said, That Acts of Assembly are Standards of Discipline, in the same Manner as the Confession of Faith is of Doctrine; I hope it will be considered, That, when we subscribe the Confession of Faith, we subscribe our Belief of every Article of it, as an Article of our Faith, clearly founded upon the infallible Word of God: But, I suppose, none will pretend to believe, That every Act of Assembly is an infallible Standard of Discipline; else, why were there so many former Acts of Assembly revers'd? And, why such a Number of Instructions from Presbyteries, that this present Act should not have the Force of a Law, even when it had the Sanction of the Assembly for a Year? And it is more than probable, that Instructions will be renewed for repealing of it; all which would be absurd, if it were a Standard of Discipline, in the same Manner as the Confession is of Doctrine. 3tio, I humbly conceive, That this Sentence of the Reverend Synod, were it confirmed by the Assembly, would tend to render the Subordination of Judicatories, and that Submission which is due by an inferior Judicatory to the superior, according to the laudable Constitution of this Church, which is founded on the Word of God; I say, This Sentence tends to render this Subordination impracticable to any Protestant: For, if Submission to the Acts and Constitutions of Judicatories were*

to be so unlimited, as that none could reclaim, or give Testimony against any one of them, without Pain of Censure, however much contrary they were to the Word of God, and the received Principles of the Church, but behoved to receive them as *Standards of Practice*, merely because the *Majority* of the Judicatory thought fit to enact them; I suppose such an *unlimited Submission* as this, will go down with none but these that receive it as their Principle, *To believe as the Church believes*. In Consequence of this, I shall only add, in the 4<sup>th</sup> Place, That this Sentence of the Synod, finding Mr. *Erskine* censurable, has an evident Tendency to throw him and many others out of the Communion of this Church, who, in the Judgment of Charity I am bound to believe, would seal their Adherence to the valuable Privileges, with which the *King of Zion* has vested her, with the last Drop of their Blood: For, if he and others cannot submit to an Admonition, to forbear testifying against an Act, which they are persuaded in their Consciences is contrary to the Word of God; then *Suspension*, *Deposition*, or at least a *Deprivation* of the Privileges of the establish'd Church, must ensue; which I am sure will at least widen the Breach which is already fatally begun, and leave us open to our Enemies, who are impatiently waiting for our Halting. And I submit it to the *Venerable Assembly*, if it be agreeable to the Principles of this Church to prosecute any Man for adhering to the Rights of the Christian People; which, if it be an Error, I am sure I am modest when I say, it is not a fundamental one; But, if it be an Error, it is



such an one, as has been strenuously maintained by the best reformed Churches, and by *this Church* also, ever since the Reformation till now.

For these *Reasons* I thought it my Duty to lay *this Matter* before the *Venerable Assembly*: For, altho' this Sentence only affects Mr. *Erskine* immediately; yet the *Consequences* of it may prove to be fatal to the whole Church, if a timous Stop be not put to such Method of Procedure, by the *Venerable Assembly*, who 'tis hop'd, in their great Wisdom and Equity, will, not only reverse *this Sentence* of the *Synod*, but also take again under their Consideration the late *Act* itself, which has already occasioned so much Heat, and is still like to be attended with worse Consequences, and restore *this Church* to the Possession of her ancient Rights and Privileges, at least as far as in them lies; in which humble *Petition*, I hope to be seconded by not a few, who earnestly wish the Welfare of our *Zion*.

J. A. FISHER.

**COPY** *Reasons of Dissent and Protestation* by Mr. Alexander Moncrieff and others, the Ministers and Elders adhering thereto, from, and against the Sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, finding Mr. Ebenezer Erskine censurable for some  
Ex

*Expressions emitted by him in his  
Sermon, at the Opening the said Syn-  
nod, October 1732.*

**T**HE Reverend Synod may believe it is with the greatest Aversion we appear in the Character of Dissenters from their Judgment; but this Sentence appearing to us to be one of those from which, according to standing Acts of the General Assembly, 'tis not only the Privilege, but also the Duty of the Members of the Judicatories of this Church to dissent; we hope, they will the more easily excuse our taking this Method to exoner ourselves: And, that this Sentence is of that Nature, will, we hope; appear to all who seriously and impartially weigh the following Reasons of Dissent, and Protestation therefrom; which, we humbly crave, the Reverend Synod may transmit with the Process to the Venerable Assembly, and order their Clerk to give us attested Copies thereof for our own Use.

1700, We dissent from, and protest against, this Sentence, because of the Synod's allowing and homologating the unaccountable partial Conduct of the Committee they appointed at the Entry of the Process: Which Committee, contrary to the plain Tenor and Scope of their Instructions, did, before they called for, or heard Mr. Erskine upon the Subject, determine, and find he was an Offender, in that he had spoken several Things, not only inconvenient, but unlawful, and appointed a Sub-committee of their Number, to see if he would confess, and forsake.

For

For justifying of which Reason of Dissent, we desire the Minutes anent that Committee may be read.

2do, Because the Synod do not condescend upon the particular Expressions emitted by Mr. *Erskine*, for which they find him censurable; but seem to take them *in cumulo*, as contained in their Committee's Paper of *Remarks*, and found by the Synod themselves to have been emitted by him, tho' all who look unto the said Paper of *Remarks*, must own, there are several Expressions, and Propositions there, found to have been emitted by Mr. *Erskine*, which are very sound, and therefore no Way censurable. And, if it be alledged the Synod have not condemned such Propositions as they stand by themselves, but as connected with other Things, according to the Committee's Remarks; 'tis plain from the Minutes, which we oppose, the Synod did not at all adopt these Remarks as theirs, but went purely on the Propositions as they had found them to have been emitted by Mr. *Erskine*.

3tio, Because the Synod condescend on no Part of the Word of God, *Confession of Faith*, *Catechisms*, or *Formula*, which Mr. *Erskine* has transgressed, and for transgressing whereof they find him censurable; but rest satisfied with a general, arbitrary Vote, finding him so.

4to, Because the Synod, in their Sentence, take no Notice of Mr. *Erskine*'s refusing some of the Expressions alledged to be his, and setting others in a quite different Light from what they appeared in the Committee's Paper, altho', by the Synod's Allowance, he gave in a Paper for



for that End; which, to us, seems inconsistent with their allowing him to give in the said Paper, as well as with the Rules of Brotherly-Love and Charity, whereby they were bound rather to believe their Brother, who had never given Ground to suspect his Ingenuity, than trust to their own frail Memories, on a bare Hearing of Propositions emitted in a long Discourse.

510, Because we saw that the great Thing that stuck with the Synod in this Matter, and determined them to find Mr. *Erskine* censurable, was, his having spoken in his Sermon against the Act of Assembly 1732, anent planting vacant Congregations: For, tho' we will not pretend to justify every particular Mode of Expression used by Mr. *Erskine* on this Head; yet, to find him censurable for declaring his Mind against that Act upon such an Occasion, appears to us a Precedent of so dangerous a Nature and Tendency, as we judge ourselves bound in Duty to testify against; and that for the following Reasons;

1mo, Because 'tis the undoubted Privilege of any Member of Presbytery, or Synod, in their respective Courts, to move Instructions to the Assembly, for repealing any Act which to them appears prejudicial to the Church, or the Rights and Privileges of her Members, and to offer such Reasons as occur to them for supporting their said Motion: And, if so, we see no Reason why the same Privilege is to be denied to any Moderator appointed by a Synod to be Mouth of the Lord to them; which Character, we conceive, obliges him to exhort his Brethren, that they exert themselves to have such Acts repealed, as lie, in his Conscience, is convinced are  
of

of the Nature above-mentioned; and, in so doing, to represent the Reasons of his Conviction and Judgment. And, we conceive, this Privilege might the rather be granted to our Brother in the present Case, as the Act was pass'd in the Assembly, before the Opinion of the Generality of Presbyteries, in the National Church, was had, agreeing thereto; directly contrary to the Act 9th Assembly 1697. Nor is it sufficient to evade the binding Force of that Act, what some do alledge, namely, That, joining the Presbyteries who were positively for the Act 1732, as transmitted by the former Assembly in Overture (which, by the By, did not exceed, if we rightly remember, Nine or Ten in Number) with such Presbyteries as were for Amendments on the Overture, and such others as returned no Opinion, the Plurality of the diffused Church were for the Act; seeing it can never justly be said, the Presbyteries, for Amendments, were found agreeing to the Act, unless it be made appear it was pass'd precisely in the Terms of their Amendments. Far less can it be said, that such Presbyteries as returned no Opinion were found agreeing to the Act; and yet by the foresaid Act 1697 'tis expressly statute, That no Act of this Nature be pass'd, till the Generality of the Presbyteries be found to agree thereto.

240, Because we know no Rule in the Scriptures, *Confession of Faith*, or *Catechism*, he has, in this Particular, transgressed; it not being pretended, so far as we know, that this Act, as it now stands, is in all Things founded on the Word of God, particularly as to Heritors, as such, and tho' of a different Communion from the

the Congregation calling. So far is our *Confession of Faith* from binding down Ministers to receive and submit to the Decrees of Assembly, which in their Conscience they are perswaded have not a solid Foundation in the Word, that therein it is expressly declared, *Chap. 31. Par. 3, 4. That Decrees of Synods and Councils are to be received with Reverence and Submission, (N. B.) if consonant to the Word of God; and that all Synods and Councils since the Apostles Time, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred.* From which, we think, it natively follows, that Ministers are to examine the Decrees of Councils by the Word; and, if found disagreeable thereto, may at least in Sermons *ad clerum* declare so much to Brethren, for exciting them to endeavour the Repeal of such Decrees. And, if it be alledged, This is inconsistent with our promised Submission to the Government of the Church, we humbly conceive that Submission is not to be understood as absolute, and illimited to every particular Act may pass in a Church, after the Ordination-Vows are come under, but limited and qualified as in the forecited Passage of *Confession*: For, if otherwise, how shall we justify either our first Reformers, or the worthy Ministers, who, before the Year 1638, testified against many Acts of the then Assemblies?

3<sup>110</sup>, Because this Step of the Synod's Conduct, in our Opinion, makes a new Term of Ministerial Communion, *viz.* That Ministers shall not, even in Discourses to their Brethren, testify against any particular Act of Assembly, tho' convinced that it was made *errante clare*,

H

and



and has a native Tendency to intimidate Ministers to testify against the Defections may happen in a Church in their Day, and to induce them to sinful Silence in the publick Cause, contrary to Act of Assembly 1646. And how far a tying down of Ministers this Way to a believing, and speaking only as the Plurality of a Church do, tends to invade, and render of little Use to mutual Edification, the Right of private Judgment, yea, to prevent, when perhaps it may come to be absolutely necessary, faithful Ministers their making a zealous Stand in the Maintenance and Defence of the Doctrine, Worship and Government of Christ's House, which they are under the strongest Obligations to support, we leave to the Impartial to judge.

Upon the Whole, We hope, that the Church of *Scotland* will show such a just Regard to the Right of private Judgment, and other Reformation-principles, as not to give Countenance to, nor approve of, any Piece of Conduct in her inferior Courts, which have a native Tendency, by mere Church-authority, to fetter the Consciences of their Brethren in Matters which they themselves will not pretend to be positively determined by our Standards of Doctrine and Government ; of which Nature and Tendency, we hope, we have made the present Sentence appear to be. *La. M<sup>r</sup> Intosh, J. Gow, John Gib Elder, Alex. Moncrieff, Ro. Coventrie, William Wilson, Geo. Meik, W. Haly.*

That this Paper of Reasons of Dissent was given in to the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*,  
that

that met at *Stirling* the Eleventh Day of *April*,  
One thousand seven hundred and thirty three  
Years, by the Reverend Mr. *Alexander Mon-*  
*crieff* Minister of the Gospel at *Abernethy*, who  
entred the Dissent, is attested by

PAT. WYLIE, *Cls. Syn.*

That this is a true Copy of the principal Rea-  
sons of Dissent transmitted from the Synod-  
Clerk to the Process against Mr. *Ebenezer Er-*  
*skine*, before the General Assembly met in *May*,  
One thousand seven hundred and thirty three  
Years, is attested by

NIC. SPENCE.



*The Paper read by Mr. Ebenezer Er-*  
*skine at the Synod of Perth and Stir-*  
*ling.*

AT the Synod in *Stirling*, *April* last, when  
Mr. *Erskine* was called, and compearing,  
he offered to deliver his Mind as to the Affair  
of the Censure upon his Sermon, which was  
then before them, but was not allowed; where-  
upon he adhered to his Appeal, and withdrew.  
But, being called back, he was told by the Mo-  
derator, that he was allowed to speak, and  
thereupon read the following Paper;

*According to the Utterance given by the Lord*  
*to me at Perth, I delivered his Mind, particu-*  
*larly with Relation to some prevailing Evils of*

the Day, which to me are Matter of Confession, and therefore dare not retract the least Part of that Testimony. I am heartily sorry, that ever the Reverend Synod should have commenc'd a Process against me, for what I am perswaded was nothing else but Truth; especially when they have never yet made it appear, that I have in the least receded from the Word of God, and our approved Standards of Doctrine, Worship, Discipline or Government. Every Man hath his own proper Gift of Utterance, and, according to the Gift bestowed on me, so I express myself at Perth; and, if I had given Offence by any Expressions uttered by me at that Time, I should very willingly retract, and beg Pardon: But I hope my Reverend Brethren will excuse me to say, That I am not yet convinced of any just Ground given for a Rebuke and Admonition.



*The* REPRESENTATION *and*  
PETITION of the Elders and  
Kirk-Session of Stirling.

Unto the Very Reverend, the Moderator and remanent Members of the Provincial Synod of Perth and Stirling, met at Stirling the tenth Day of April, One thousand seven hundred and thirty three Years; The Representation  
and



and Petition of us after-subscribing Elders of  
the Kirk-session of Stirling.

*Humbly Sheweth,*

**T**HAT whereas the Provincial Synod of  
*Perth* and *Stirling* did, at their Mee-  
ting at *Perth* the Day of *October* last, find  
our Reverend Minister, Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine*,  
censurable, on the Account of Expressions emit-  
ted by him in a Sermon at the Opening of the  
said Synod, and thereupon did resolve to rebuke  
the said Mr. *Erskine*, and admonish him to be-  
have orderly for the future; and the Execution  
of the foresaid Sentence of Rebuke and Admo-  
nition being referred to this Meeting of Synod,  
we crave Leave, with all Submission, to repre-  
sent to the very Reverend Synod, That, as the  
said Sentence imports a Crime and Transgression  
of a very offensive Nature, so it cannot but be  
very afflicting and grieving to us, that our Re-  
verend Minister stands condemned, after this Man-  
ner, by a Provincial Synod of *Perth* and *Stir-  
ling*.

If we had not had some considerable Doubts  
about the Justice and Equity of the foresaid Sen-  
tence, we should have laid our Hands upon our  
Mouths, and been silent, at this Time, before  
the Reverend Synod; but, since it is otherwise,  
we hope, our Interest in our Minister, and our  
Concern for Truth itself, may apologize for us,  
tho' we reclaim against the Sentence of the last  
Synod; and that for the following Reasons:

1<sup>mo</sup>, The Synod have found our Minister cen-  
surable for Expressions emitted by him; but they  
have not, in their Sentence, made any particular  
Con-

Condescension upon the Expressions that gave Offence: And we cannot understand from the Sentence itself, what the hainous Expressions are, for which he is to be rebuked and admonished; and therefore we submit to the Judgment of this Reverend Synod, if such an indistinct and general Sentence is agreeable to the Wisdom, or for the Honour and Credit of such a Court as the Provincial Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*.

2do, The Synod have, not only condemned, in general, the Expressions they found to be emitted by our Minister, but they have condemned them without ever finding any of them to be contrary to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, or Form of Church-Government. As these are the received Standards by which we humbly conceive the Doctrine of the Ministers of this Church is to be tried and judged; so it cannot but be wounding and grieving to us, that our Minister stands condemned by a Provincial Synod, when yet he is not found to have transgressed any of the approved Standards of this Church.

3tio, Tho' we cannot understand from the Sentence itself what it is that has given so much Offence, yet it is commonly said, That Mr. *Erskine's*, expressing himself with some Concern against the Act of the last Assembly concerning the planting of vacant Congregations, is the Thing that chiefly offended: And, if so, we beg Leave humbly to represent to this very Reverend Synod, That, by the foresaid Sentence, Church-power and Authority, appears to us to be screw'd up to such an unwarrantable Height, that

that in no Case a Minister is allowed to open his Mouth in Pulpit against any Act of a General Assembly; tho' we are taught by our *Confession of Faith*, Chap. 31. Art. 3, 4. *That Decrees of Synods and Councils are to be received with Reverence and Submission, if consonant to the Word of God: And that all Synods and Councils since the Apostles Time, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred.* And it is the more affecting to us, when it is considered, that the foresaid Act of Assembly gives a Power to such as are, not only disaffected to our gracious Sovereign King George, and the Protestant Succession in his Family, but also declared Enemies to our excellent Presbyterian Constitution, to settle many, if not most, of the Congregations in *Scotland*. And we leave it to this very Reverend Synod, to judge what fatal Effects this may very soon produce in the Church of *Scotland*.

410, We beg Leave also to represent to the very Reverend Synod, That, as the foresaid Sentence has been very grievous and stumbling to many who are hearty Friends to this Church; so, if the Execution of it is pushed, we are afraid it may be attended with dangerous Consequences. Tho' the condemnatory Sentence past against our Minister cannot lessen his Character amongst us, nor diminish from the just Esteem that we, and many others thro' the Land, have for him; yet, what wide Breaches such Proceedings may occasion, we leave it to the more deliberate Judgment of this Reverend Court.

As this our Representation proceeds from a sincere Concern for Peace and Truth, and the pro-



promoting the valuable Ends of a Gospel-dispensation in this Place and Province ; so we hope, the Reverend Synod will put the most favourable Construction upon the same.

*May it therefore please this very Reverend Synod, to repeal the Sentence of the last Synod, finding Mr. Erskine censurable, and appointing him to be rebuked and admonished : And your Petitioners shall ever pray.*

WILL. ALLAN Baillie.  
JOHN GIBB Baillie.  
WILL. MAIBEN D<sup>n</sup>. of Gild.  
JAMES STEVENSON.  
ANDREW MILLAR.  
ANDREW GALLOWAY.  
HA. ALLAN.  
ROBERT WILLISON.  
WILLIAM ALLAN.  
JOHN THOMSON.  
JOHN SHIRRA.  
JOHN STEVENSON.  
ROBERT BANKS.  
JAMES CALLENDAR.  
JOHN MAIN Elders.

ACT

**ACT and SENTENCE** concerning  
*Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, and some o-  
 ther Ministers adhering to his Pro-  
 test, for their Contempt of the Au-  
 thority of the General Assembly.*

Edinburgh, May *Fifteenth*, One thousand seven  
*hundred and thirty three.*

**T**HE General Assembly having, at a former  
 Diet, considered an Appeal entred by Mr.  
*Ebenezer Erskine* Minister at *Stirling*, from a  
 Sentence of the Synod of *Perth and Stirling*,  
 wherein the said Synod had found Ground to  
 censure him, and appointed him to be rebuked,  
 on Account of several indecent Expressions, ut-  
 tered by him in a Sermon preached before the  
 said Synod in *October* last; tending to disquiet  
 the Peace of this Church, and impugning several  
 Acts of Assembly, and Proceedings of the Church-  
 Judicatories; and had appointed him, to be ad-  
 monished to behave orderly for the future. —  
 The Assembly found these Expressions vented by  
 Mr. *Erskine*, and contained in the Minutes of  
 the foresaid Synod's Proceedings, with the An-  
 swers thereto made by him, to be offensive, and  
 to tend to disturb the Peace and good Order of  
 this Church; therefore they approved the Pro-  
 ceedings of the Synod, and appointed him to be  
 rebuked and admonished by the Moderator at  
 their own Bar, in order to terminate the Process,  
 which was done accordingly. But the foresaid  
 Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine*, together with Mr. *Willi-*

*am Wilson* Minister at *Perth*, *Mr. Alexander Moncrieff* Minister at *Abernerby*, and *Mr. James Fisher* Minister at *Kinclaven*, gave in a Paper at the Assembly-Bar, subscribed by them, craving and protesting that the same might be read and recorded in the Minutes of the Assembly: But the Assembly having represented to them the Irregularity and Danger of such a Practice, and desired them to withdraw their Paper and Protest; and they refusing to do it, and withdrawing, they were ordered to be cited to the next Diet, and a Committee was appointed to consider the Paper and their Conduct in this Affair, and to bring in by an Overture what might be fit for the Assembly to do upon the whole Affair. This Day the said four Brethren having compeared, the Assembly, to shew all Tenderness towards them, appointed a Committee to confer with them, and endeavour to persuade them to withdraw their Paper and Protest, and submit themselves to the Assembly: Who, having retired, did return, and shewed that these four Brethren continued fully resolved to adhere to their said Paper and Protest. Then the Committee reported, That they had considered the Paper given in by the foresaid Brethren the last Night, and the whole of their Conduct. The said Paper being produced, was read, the Tenor whereof follows;

*P R O-*



**PROTEST** by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine  
and others, given in to the Assembly  
1733.

**A**Ltho' I have a very great and dutiful Regard to the Judicatories of this Church, to whom I own my Subjection in the Lord; yet, in respect the Assembly have found me censurable, and have tendred a Rebuke and Admonition to me, for Things I conceive agreeable unto, and founded upon, the Word of God, and our approved Standards; I find myself obliged to protest against the foresaid Censure, as importing, that I have in my Doctrine, at the Opening of the Synod of *Perth* October last, departed from the Word of God, and the foresaid Standards; and that I shall be at Liberty to preach the same Truths of God, and to testify against the same or like Defections of this Church, upon all proper Occasions. And I do hereby adhere unto the Testimonies I have formerly emitted against the Act of Assembly 1732, whether in the Protest entred against it in open Assembly, or yet in my Synodical Sermon, craving this my Protest and Declaration to be insert in the Records of Assembly, and that I be allowed Extracts thereof.

May 14,

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

1733

**W**E Undersubscribing Ministers, Dissenters from the Sentence of the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*, do hereby adhere to the above Protest

testation and Declaration, containing a Testimony against the Act of Assembly 1732, and asserting our Privilege and Duty to testify publickly against the same or like Defections, upon all proper Occasions.

WILLIAM WILSON.

ALEXR. MONCRIEFF.

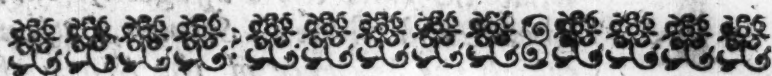
**I** Mr. *James Fisher* Minister at *Kinclaven*, Appellant against the Sentence of the Synod of *Perth* in this Question, altho' the Committee of Bills did not think fit to transmit my Reasons of Appeal, find myself obliged to adhere unto the foresaid Protestation and Declaration.

JA. FISHER.

The Committee offered their Overture upon the whole Affair: Which being read and considered, the Assembly, by a very great Majority, enacted and appointed, as follows,

The General Assembly ordains, That the four Brethren aforesaid appear before the Commission in *August* next, and then show their Sorrow for their Conduct and Misbehaviour, in offering to protest, and in giving in to this Assembly the Paper by them subscribed; and that they then retract the same. And in case they do not appear before the said Commission in *August*, and then show their Sorrow, and retract, as said is, the Commission is hereby impowered and appointed to suspend the said Brethren, or such of them as shall not obey, from the Exercise of their Ministry. And further, in case the said Brethren shall be suspended by the said Commission, and that they shall act contrary to the said Sentence of Suspension, the Commission is hereby

by impowered and appointed, at their Meeting in *November*, or any subsequent Meeting, to proceed to a higher Censure against the said four Brethren, or such of them as shall continue to offend by transgressing this Act. And the General Assembly do appoint the several Presbyteries, of which the said Brethren are Members, to report to the Commission in *August*, and subsequent Meetings of it, their Conduct and Behaviour with respect to this Act.



*The Paper offered to the General Assembly, by the protesting Brethren, May 1733.*

The following Paper being conceived by the four protesting Brethren, and offered to the Assembly as their joint Speech at the Bar, after the Intimation of the Sentence, was not subscribed by them, because it was reasonably thought, they would have been allowed to read it, which yet was peremptorily refused them; the Tenor whereof follows;

**I**N *Regard the Venerable Assembly have come to a positive Sentence without hearing our Defences, and have appointed the Commission to execute their Sentence in August, in case we do not retract what we have done, we cannot but complain of this uncommon Procedure, and*



*declare that we are not at Liberty to take this  
Affair to an Avisandum.*



## APPENDIX.

**T**HE Publisher of the *Acts* has subjoin'd what he calls the *Passages of Mr. Ebenezer Erskine's Sermon, upon which the Sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, against him, was founded*; but the attentive Reader will find, from the *Minutes*, that this Paper bears the Title of *Remarks upon a Sermon delivered by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, &c.* Now, it must be observed, That these *Remarks* were made only by Mr. *Mercer*, Mr. *Mackie*, and some others of the warm Managers against Mr. *Erskine*: And the Reader will easily see, from the *Process*, that this Paper was laid before a Committee of Synod; and that the Committee transmitted the same to the Synod, without passing any Judgment upon it. And the Reader may likewise observe, That the Synod have never adopted these *Remarks*. 'Tis true, they found the Expressions; contain'd in that Paper, to have been uttered by Mr. *Erskine*, or Words to the same Purpose; but they *delayed the Consideration of the Remarks till afterwards*, and never afterwards resumed the Consideration of them, nor gave any Judgment upon them (tho' Mr. *Erskine*, thro' a Mistake, in his Answers to that Paper, calls it, *The Synod's*

*nod's Remarks.*) From whence it is plain, that these *Remarks* can only derive any Weight and Authority they have from the above-named Brethren, since they were never adopted by the Synod, or their Committee: And yet those same *Remarks*, and the Expressions which the Synod found to have been emitted by Mr. *Erskine*, are so much blended together, that it may be reasonably supposed, the Managers against Mr. *Erskine* had them in their Eye at the Passing of the condemnatory Sentence, tho' the Synod had never determined in the Justness or the Relevancy of any one of them.

But it is hop'd, that, by publishing of the *Propositions themselves*, even as stated by the Synod, and adopted by the *Assembly*, as the Ground of the Censure against Mr. *Erskine*, without these *Remarks*, the Reader will be capable to judge, whether he was justly censurable for them; tho' to any, who peruse the Sermon itself, and observe them in the Connection, and as emitted in his own Words, it will appear that they are still less obnoxious to Censure.

The *Propositions*, simply as they stand in the *Synod's Minutes*, and upon which the Assembly founded their Censure, are, as follow: And, if they are not distinct, the Reader may know whom to blame for it.

Proposition 1. *He left it to the Conscience of every One to judge, what of these Corruptions were to be found among ourselves at this Day.*

Prop. 2. *That mistaken Notions of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, was the Ground of many Things that were wrong among us at this Day.*

Prop.

Prop. 3. *The Jewish Teachers, being connected with the Great, trampled upon the People as an unhallowed Mob.*

Prop. 4. *In order to One's being accounted a Builder, there were two Things necessary, the Call of God, and the Call of the Church: That they who had not the Call of the Church, should be lookt upon as Thieves and Robbers; and this Call ought not to be by the Heritors, or any other Set of Men, but by the whole Church: And, that a Minister had not God's Call, who had only a Call from the Heritors, or any other Set of Men.*

Prop. 5. *That this was a natural Right, that every Society had, to chuse Servants for themselves; and, that it would be accounted a great Bondage, and Servitude, upon any Family, if Foreigners were to chuse Servants for them; and, that certainly the Church had a Power of chusing their own Ministers, seeing they were the freest Society upon Earth.*

Prop. 6. *That after the late wonderful Revolution, by which our Church was delivered, it might have been expected, that this Church would have given some Testimony against these Encroachments; but, that he did not remember ever they had made an Act, asserting the Headship of our Lord Jesus, since the Revolution.*

Prop. 7. *That a Cry had gone up to Heaven about these Thing, in the Words of the Spouse, The Watchmen that went about the City had found her, and taken away her Vail from her, and smote her: And that this Cry came before the Bar of the last General Assembly, but, instead of redressing this, and other Grievances, they*



they increased them, by lodging the Power of Election in Heritors and Elders, excluding the People, whereby Christ was deeply wounded in his Members: That whatever Church-Authority was in that Act, there was nothing of the Authority of the Head of the Church; That he was sure it had no Foundation in Scripture, where there are no Distinctions, in spiritual Matters, made betwixt the rich Man with the Gold Ring in gay Clothing, and the poor Man; That if Christ were personally present (and I being here, by the Appointment of the Synod, in his Stead) I say, were Christ personally present he would say to you, Forasmuch as you have done it unto one of these little Ones, you have done it unto me.

Prop. 8. Ministers are not to be as dumb Dogs, when their fellow Builders go wrong; and, tho' this will offend, yet be behoved to speak.

Now, altho' the Synod of Perth and Stirling founded their condemnatory Sentence upon the above Expressions, without regarding Mr. Erskine's Answers thereto; yet the General Assembly supplied that Defect, when besides the Expressions, as the Synod had found them, they condemned also his Answers thereto: And the Reader, by comparing them together, may judge for himself, if there is any just Ground for the solemn Censure of Rebuke and Admonition at the Assembly's Bar, which was past thereupon.

The Prefacer says, " That the Sentence, in  
 " the Case of Mr. Erskine, was published for  
 " the Information of the Ministers, and Mem-  
 " bers of this Church, who were not present at  
 " the Assembly, to prevent Misrepresentations;

“ which are too frequent among us at present ;  
 “ and that it was published from a true Copy of  
 “ the Assembly’s Minutes.” And he adds, “ That  
 “ the Assembly were constrained to reject Mr.  
 “ *Erskine’s* Appeal, and to rebuke him at their  
 “ Bar : Which being done, he offered a Paper,  
 “ containing his Adherence to his former Pra-  
 “ ctice ; and protested, that he would not sub-  
 “ mit to their Rebuke ; and to him adhered  
 “ other three Ministers, thereby making them-  
 “ selves equally guilty with him.” As to which,  
 the Reader may compare the original Paper,  
 containing the *Dissent*, and the *Reasons of Dis-*  
*sent*, herewith published, with the Terms in  
 which their Adherence to Mr. *Erskine’s* Protest  
 is express’d ; and he will find, that, as they have  
 not adopted Mr. *Erskine’s* Mode of Expression,  
 first or last ; so the Crime, the *Prefacer* would  
 impress the World of their being guilty of, is no  
 other, but that they protested against inflicting  
 any Censure upon Mr. *Erskine*, for testifying,  
 in his Sermon to his Brethren, against the Act  
 1732, in order to their exerting themselves to  
 have what seemed wrong in it rectified in a regular  
 Way. And that they *protested* at the same Time,  
 That by the *Rebuke* and *Admonition* given to  
 Mr. *Erskine*, for testifying against the said Act  
 as above, their Liberty and Privilege, according  
 to their Duty by their Ordination-Engagements,  
 to testify against this or other Defections of this  
 Church, might not be buried and suppressed ;  
 and a Way thus opened for the Church herself  
 to overthrow our Constitution more effectual-  
 ly, than it could probably be done by foreign  
 Force or Influence. And if the *Prefacer* designs

to give full Satisfaction to the Ministers and Members of this Church, who have this Affair only by Report, it will perhaps be necessary, in order to their being convinced, that these Brethren were guilty of a *Crime* inferring *Suspension*, &c. and of their *Obstinacy*, when it was in their *Power*, by a due *Submission*, to have saved the *Judicatories*, and themselves, from all further *Trouble*; that he make it appear, that a Church of *Jesus Christ*, may warrantably, and according to the Rules laid down in his Word, and agreeably to the Principles of Reason itself, settle a Minister in a Congregation, upon the Call and Suit of Heritors not residing in the Parish, and some of them not of the Communion of the established Church, against the positive Voice of the whole Eldership, and in Opposition to the declared Mind of every Head of Family in the Parish, except Four who were silent; but gave no positive Consent unto it, and one Boy about Fourteen Years of Age, who, by his Tutor, voted for the Settlement; and another Heritor, who gave his Voice for the Settlement upon the Day of the Moderation, but a few Days after judiciously retracted it, and acceded to the Opposers of the Settlement, and joined the whole Parish in the Choice they had made of another at the Moderation.

The above is the very Case of the Settlement of the Parish of *Kingoldrum*, voted and determined by the last Assembly, and which was said, in open House, to be agreeable to and founded upon the Act 1732. And it is plain, that it might possibly have been so; and, whether



in Fact, according to a nice Examination of the Claims of such as are called legal Voters, it is so or not; yet it is obvious to every Man, who narrowly looks into the Act 1732, that a parallel Case may agree very well with it. He may likewise shew, That, according to other Acts of former Assemblies, such as were appointed to be read by the Ministers in the Presbytery of *Dunfermline*, some Time in *June* last, the Presbytery, where such a Settlement as above shall take Place, are bound in Duty, and in Obedience to these standing Rules of this Church, to deny Sealing Ordinances, and the very Benefit of hearing the Word of God preached, to all within such a Congregation, who refuse to submit to the Ministry of a Teacher, in their Opinion imposed upon them; and that merely for their so doing, without any other Offence whatsoever. It may likewise be proper for him, to make it appear, (in case his Argument is not very convincing in proving what is above desiderate) that the wrong Decrees of a fallible Church (such as this Church is by her own Confession) are not to be called in Question by her Office-bearers, nor examined by the Word of God; and, if found contrary to it, that they are not to declare them to be such, &c. upon proper Occasions, in order to their being amended; tho', by the Commission they have received from her Head and Lord, they are bound upon the Peril of their Souls to declare the whole Counsel of God, and to receive no Decrees inconsistent with the Word of God, and to endeavour to have any such Decrees voided and repealed, for the Glory of God, and the Church's Safety

and

and Preservation. It will also have its own Use, to set this Affair in a due Light, for the Conviction of the Ministers and Members of this Church; If the *Publisher* of the Acts shall think fit to prove it, that when Ministers of Christ are engaged in a Cause of publick Concern, for the Defence of the Constitution they are solemnly engaged to support, they may notwithstanding tamely consent to have their Mouths gagg'd by mere Authority, from speaking one Word in the Cause; and, to save their own Heads, they may stand by and see their Brother censured for doing his Duty; and thereby, not only their own Liberty, but that of every Member in this Church, to *testify* (when they can do little Thing else) against the *Defections* of a declining Church, buried together with his. That they are to be *suspended* and discharged, according to the Rules of God's Word, from *speaking any more in the Name of the Lord*, as having rendred themselves unworthy of that sacred Character, for saying, with some Solemnity, That they are obliged in Duty, and therefore cannot but maintain their Liberty, to *testify* against present and future Defections of a Church, whereof they are Ministers and Officers, when her *Defection* is to them most evident; and at a Time when their Liberty, thus to bear Witness to the Truth, and to excite themselves and others to their Duty, seems in the plainest Manner to be restrained and suppress'd. And that, whatever self-destructive Measures the Plurality of a Society shall take, the Minority have no Right to reclaim, but are bound to behold the fatal *Catastrophe* with profound

found Silence and Submission, without opening their Mouths in the most decent Manner, or upon the most proper Occasion, to evite or prevent it.

If the *Publisher* of the Acts does not enter upon, and go handsomly through, the Argument; it is possible some Ministers and Members of this Church may suspect he has mistaken the true State of the Question, in the Case of the dissenting Brethren; and, it may be added, of Mr. *Erskine* likewise: Seeing, if the other Propositions, besides these which relate directly to the Act 1732, which is the main Ground at present of his Testimony, as well as of his Brethren adhering to him, as is plain from the Terms in which both his Protest and their Adherence is conceived; the other Propositions are either nothing to the Purpose, the Composers of the *Remarks* had in View, or they are Truths plain and evident in themselves, however some Members of the Synod were very much offended at them, for Reasons best known to themselves; which will further appear, when it is observed, that, tho' the *Publisher* says, That Mr. *Erskine* protested that he would not submit to the Assembly's Rebuke, it is however evident from the Paper he gave in, that, in the Preamble to his Protest, he acknowledged the Authority of this Church to censure him as well as others, by Rebuke, Admonition or otherwise; seeing he therein owns his Subjection to her Judicatories in the Lord; and that he did not protest against the Censure dispensed unto him, as if he contemned the Authority of the Church, but as importing that the Doctrines he had preached were unsound



found, and therefore no more to be published in this Church as the Truths of God, either by him or any other Minister. And the only Particular he condescends upon, is his doctrinal Condemnation of the Act 1732, by which he puts his Testimony upon the very same Foundation with his *Adherents*; it being what, it would seem, he had most in his Eye all along, as being the Truth relating to Church-Government, most called in Question at present. And 'tis probable, that, if the *Publisher* shall not say more than he has done, to convince the Members of this Church, That it was necessary, just and expedient, to *suspend* Ministers, and to proceed from that to an higher Censure against them, merely for defending a Truth founded in the Scriptures, and, agreeably thereunto, declared to be a Principle of this Church in her *Second Book of Discipline*, sworn to in our National Covenant; and for asserting their Liberty and Duty to testify against publick Defections of this Church, which, if continued in, threaten her with speedy Ruin and Desolation; many of them who were not present at the Assembly, may possibly think that the *Publisher* himself is guilty of what he charges upon Mr. *Erskine*, viz. of a *bold and daring Practice*, if it may be called such, for a Man, without having Courage to tell who he is, to defame Ministers, and to pretend he has Reasons to convince the World, that their Crime is black, without advancing one Reason to support what he says.

The Reader will judge, upon considering the Whole, whether Mr. *Erskine* and his *Adherents* are to be condemned for testifying against the

the Act 1732, in order to have it amended, that the Constitution of this Church might not be overturned and subverted by it; and for asserting their own Liberty, and that of other Members of this Church, to testify, according to Duty, against this or other Defections of this Church: Or, if the Members of the Synod are not rather to be blamed, who attack'd Mr. *Erskine* with a great deal of Zeal, altho' they had nothing considerable to lay to his Charge; as appears from their not being able to found a particular Relevancy of one or more of his Propositions, but that they were obliged to betake themselves to a general Relevancy upon the whole Particulars jumbled together, as being a Thing more easily to be obtained; seeing a numerous Body of Men might some of them think one Expression wrong, and others another, tho' in the mean Time they might never perhaps agree all together in the Relevancy of any one of them: And which is likewise evident from their own *Answers* to Mr. *Erskine's Reasons of Appeal*, in which, after some Months Time to deliberate upon the Affair, they have not brought forth any Thing against him, but argue the Matter from mere Church-Authority: And if they had not acted more wisely, if they had waved that Affair, and brought no such Question upon the Field; especially seeing it was fairly laid before them, as an Argument against taking in this Cause, and for dismissing it rather in Point of Prudence, That, if this Affair was push'd, it might probably issue in such an Event as has happened, and tend to Schism and Division in this Church; and that the Balance in the Synod, upon both Sides of the Question, was so equal, that after a litigious Dispute for two or three Days, by which some of Mr. *Erskine's* Friends were outwearied and went off, it was carried against him only by five or six Voices.

